

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5417

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USMISSION NATO

AMCONGEN MILAN

AMCONGEN NAPLES

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 1452

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: EARLY RETURNS FROM DC LOCAL CONGRESSES

1. EARLY RETURNS REPRESENTING ABOUT 70 PERCENT OF VOTE IN NATIONWIDE DC "SECTIONAL" ASSEMBLIES INDICATE A SLIGHT LEFTWARDS SHIFT. LEFT AND CENTER-LEFT PARTY GROUPS AND FACTIONS SUPPORTING DC SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI GARNERED ROUGHLY 45 PERCENT OF VOTES, WITH REST GOING TO FANFANI, FORLANI, PICCOLI-BISAGLIA AND ANDREOTTI FORCES. MULTIPLICITY OF LISTS PRESENTED (489 IN 95 PROVINCES) MAKE OVERALL EVALUATION OF QFACTIONAL STRENGTH IMPOSSIBLE AND DC SOURCES BELIEVE SITUATION WILL ONLY BE CLARIFIED AT REGIONAL CONGRESSES SCHEDULED FOR MID-FEBRUARY.

2. SITUATION CLEARER IN SEVERAL CITIES, INCLUDING NAPLES, FLORENCE AND ROME. IN NAPLES, SECTIONAL CONGRESSES GAVE ABSOLUTE MAJORITY TO SUPPORTERS OF "GAVA CLAN," DESPITE INTENSIVE EFFORTS OF HETEROGENEOUS ANTI-GAVA COALITION TO UNSEAT THEM. IN FLORENCE, FANFANI FORCES SUFFERED A SHARP REVERSE, FAILING FROM 40 PERCENT TO 25 PERCENT OF VOTES CAST. RESULT WAS SHARP BLOW TO FANFANI'S LIEUTENANT IN TUSCANY, IVO BUTINI, WHO HAD BEEN CRITICIZED FOR IRON HAND WITH WHICH HE CONTROLLED LOCAL DC FEDERATION. IN

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LAZIO REGION (ROME), CENTER-RIGHT FORCES LED BY ANDREOTTI-

PETRUCCI ALLIANCE WON AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY OF VOTES.
PROBLEM FACED BY PARTY REFORM SUPPORTERS IN ROME INDICATED
BY POOR SHOWING OF ATTRACTIVE REFORM CANDIDATE BARTOLOMEO
CICCARDINI WHO (ACCORDING TO PARTIAL RETURNS GARNERED
LESS THAN 2 PERCENT OF VOTE.

3. COMMENT: COMPLETE RETURNS NOT EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE
UNTIL NEXT WEEK. SHIFTS NOW VISIBLE ARE RELATIVELY MODEST.
HOWEVER, IF ZACCAGNINI FORCES AT REGIONAL CONGRESSES MOVE
CLOSER TO PARITY WITH CENTER-RIGHT OF PARTY, HIS CHANCES
TO STAY ON AS PARTY SECRETARY WILL INCREASE. ZACCAGNINI'S
STOCK HAS ALREADY GONE UP SINCE OCTOBER-NOVEMBER LAST YEAR
WHEN FORLANI BANDWAGON APPEARED TO BE FORMING. HOWEVER, A
PRINCIPAL BARRIER TO ZACCAGNINI SUCCEEDING HIMSELF AS DC
SECRETARY REMAINS THE RELUCTANCE OF REST OF PARTY TO SEE
BOTH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF
DC'S SMALLEST (MOROTEO) FACTION. VOLPE

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